



Chronic disease and related conditions at emergency treatment facilities in the New Orleans area after Hurricane Katrina

Author(s): Sharma AJ, Weiss EC, Young SL, Stephens K, Ratard R, Straif-Bourgeois S, Sokol TM, Vranken P, Rubin CH
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Abstract:

BACKGROUND: Disaster preparations usually focus on preventing injury and infectious disease. However, people with chronic disease and related conditions (CDRCs), including obstetric/gynecological conditions, may be vulnerable to disruptions caused by disasters. **METHODS:** We used surveillance data collected after Hurricane Katrina to characterize the burden of visits for CDRCs at emergency treatment facilities (eg, hospitals, disaster medical assistance teams, military aid stations). In 6 parishes in and around New Orleans, health care providers at 29 emergency treatment facilities completed a standardized questionnaire for injury and illness surveillance from September 8 through October 22, 2005. **RESULTS:** Of 21,673 health care visits, 58.0% were for illness (24.3% CDRCs, 75.7% non-CDRCs), 29.1% for injury, 7.2% for medication refills, and 5.7% for routine or follow-up care. The proportion of visits for CDRCs increased with age. Among men presenting with CDRCs, the most common illnesses were cardiovascular disease (36.8%), chronic lower-respiratory disease (12.3%), and diabetes/glucose abnormalities (7.7%). Among women presenting with CDRCs, the most common were cardiovascular disease (29.2%), obstetric/gynecological conditions (18.2%), and chronic lower-respiratory disease (12.0%). Subsequent hospitalization occurred among 28.7% of people presenting with CDRCs versus 10.9% of those with non-CDRCs and 3.8% of those with injury. **CONCLUSIONS:** Our data illustrate the importance of including CDRCs as a part of emergency response planning.

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Resource Description

Exposure :

weather or climate related pathway by which climate change affects health

Extreme Weather Event, Food/Water Security, Temperature

Extreme Weather Event: Flooding, Hurricanes/Cyclones

Food/Water Security: Food Access/Distribution

Temperature: Extreme Cold, Extreme Heat

Geographic Feature:

resource focuses on specific type of geography

Climate Change and Human Health Literature Portal

Ocean/Coastal, Urban

Geographic Location:

resource focuses on specific location

United States

Health Impact:

specification of health effect or disease related to climate change exposure

Cardiovascular Effect, Diabetes/Obesity, Infectious Disease, Injury, Mental Health/Stress, Respiratory Effect

Infectious Disease: General Infectious Disease

Mental Health Effect/Stress: Other Mental Disorder

Respiratory Effect: Chronic Obstructive Pulmonary Disease

Medical Community Engagement:

resource focus on how the medical community discusses or acts to address health impacts of climate change

A focus of content

Mitigation/Adaptation:

mitigation or adaptation strategy is a focus of resource

Adaptation

Population of Concern: A focus of content

Population of Concern:

populations at particular risk or vulnerability to climate change impacts

Elderly

Other Vulnerable Population: Pre-existing medical conditions; Women

Resource Type:

format or standard characteristic of resource

Research Article

Resilience:

capacity of an individual, community, or institution to dynamically and effectively respond or adapt to shifting climate impact circumstances while continuing to function

A focus of content

Timescale:

time period studied

Time Scale Unspecified